

REMARKS

This submission has been filed concurrently with a Request for Continued Examination of this Application.

In the response dated March 12, 2004, Applicant had argued the patentability of the present invention by stating that the first controller operates on its own initiative, without the need for a user to enter a command, and that image information is automatically subjected to image formation based on the priority order information established in advance, without receiving instructions directly from an operator. The Examiner had stated that these aspects of the invention are not recited in the claims (see section 1, paragraph 3 of the Advisory Action).

Applicant has amended claims 1, 9, 15 and 23 in order to further emphasize that the first controller operates on its own initiative to cause the image forming device to form an image based on the transmitted image information, i.e., the first controller operates automatically. Support for these amendments can be found at page 17, line 18 to page 18, line 4 and at page 18, lines 16-22.

Satoh does not teach that the first controller automatically causes the image forming apparatus to form an image based on the transmitted image information as recited in claims 1, 9, 15 and 23. In contrast to the present invention, Satoh teaches that the image information is transmitted to be finally stored in a memory.

Satoh is directed to the transmission and reception of video or TV signals captured by video cameras (col. 1, lines 7-25). The captured image data is transmitted in digital form to a memory card (col. 1, lines 25-28).

Figures 7, 8, 31 and 32 of Satoh describe the communication of video data between the transmission and reception video cameras of Satoh. Video data is sent to the reception video camera memory card (step S23 of Fig. 8 described at col. 12, lines 49-54 and step S152 of Fig. 32 described at col. 19, lines 25-30). The sequence of steps ultimately ends when the reception video camera confirms that all video data has been transmitted (step S38 of Fig. 8 described at col. 13, lines 36-42 and step S139 of Fig. 31 described at col. 19, line 64 to col. 20, line 5). In summary, Satoh teaches a system for the transmission of

video data captured by a first video camera to the memory of a second video camera.

The present invention discloses an image forming system and method that results in the efficient formation of images through the use of a "mini-lab" containing a high capacity image forming device. Large amounts of image information that await image formation are stored in remote memory locations. These remote memory locations communicate the image information to the mini-lab so as to allow the mini-lab to form the images. The efficiency of the image forming process is thereby enhanced by forming the images at the location of the mini-lab, rather than at the numerous sites of the memorys (pages 1-3).

As recited in claims 1, 9, 15 and 23, the first controller automatically controls the image forming device to form images based on the image information transmitted from the remote memory location. Thus, the present invention eliminates the need for an operator to manually initiate the image forming process (page 17, line 18 to page 18, line 4). Problems associated with delayed finishing are therefore eliminated (page 18, lines 20-22).

Applicant submits that the present invention is patentable over Satoh because:

(1) the present invention teaches the communication of image information to an image forming device that is used to form or print images, while Satoh teaches the communication of video data to be stored in a memory;

(2) the first controller of the invention automatically causes the image forming device to form an image after image information is received, while Satoh simply stores the information after it is received;

(3) it would not be obvious to modify Satoh to include an image forming device because Satoh is concerned with the communication of video data for storage purposes, while the present invention is concerned with the communication of image information for printing purposes;
or

(4) it would not be obvious to modify Satoh to include a first controller that automatically causes the image forming device to form an image, since Satoh contains no controller and no image forming device.

Ota has been cited to teach image formation based on priority order information. Satoh and Ota do not teach the novel aspects of the present invention described above. Applicant therefore submits that the present invention is patentable over Satoh and Ota taken alone or in combination.

Finally, Applicant notes that claim 4 has been amended to correct a minor typographical error. The word "send" has been changed to "sends" to read properly.


In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. A one month extension of time is hereby requested and PTO Form 2038 is enclosed herewith authorizing payment of the appropriate government fee. Should any further fees or extensions of time be necessary in order to maintain this Application in

pending condition, appropriate requests are hereby made and
authorization is given to debit Account # 02-2275.

Respectfully submitted,

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